

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Montana State Office

5001 Southgate Drive

Billings, Montana 59101-4669

<http://www.mt.blm.gov/>

In Reply To:

4100(923)P

February 22, 2006

EMAIL TRANSMISSION – 02/23/06

Instruction Memorandum No. MT-2006-050

Expires: 9/30/07

To: State Management Team

From: State Director

Subject: Developing Strategy to Eliminate the Backlog of Unprocessed Grazing Permit by the End of Fiscal Year (FY) 2009
DD: March 10, 2006

Program Area: Rangeland Management

Purpose: The purpose of this Instruction Memorandum (IM) is to reaffirm the Montana/Dakotas Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) commitment to eliminate the backlog of unprocessed grazing permits by the end of FY 2009.

Policy/Action: Each field office (FO) will review its current permit processing schedule (backlog of permits not fully processed and permits expiring through FY 2009) and current strategy for eliminating the backlog and meeting the schedule.

By March 10, 2006, each FO will develop and provide a strategy for eliminating the backlog and meeting the FY 2009 permit renewal target. Your strategy should include any obstacles and identify how you plan to overcome these obstacles and any work that will be forgone in order to meet the commitment. Use the attached report format to develop this report. Field office reports are to be submitted to Bill McIlvain (MT923) by March 10, 2006.

Background: In 1999 and 2000, almost 7200 of the 18,000 grazing permits administered by the BLM expired. This coincided with a change in policy regarding NEPA analysis to document site specific grazing effects and initiating evaluation of the status of land health. Since 1999, the BLM has been providing Congress and OMB with annual progress reports on eliminating the backlog of expired but unprocessed grazing permits. While the Montana/Dakotas BLM has made significant progress, approximately 2237 permits, including backlogs, will need to be renewed by the end of FY 2009.

Timeframe: Effective immediately.

Budget Impact: Use and distribution of available funds may be affected from FY 2006 thorough FY 2009. No additional range program funding is anticipated.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: None.

Coordination: Washington Office program leads, State program leads and field office staff.

Contact: If you have questions regarding this IM, please contact Bill McIlvain, Range Management Specialist, Montana State Office, at (406) 896-5028.

Signed by: Theresa M. Hanley, Acting

Authenticated by: Merry Prestridge (MT923)

2 Attachments

- 1-Washington Office IM No. 2006-089, Developing Strategy to Eliminate the Backlog of Unprocessed Grazing Permits by End of Fiscal Year 2009 (2 pp)
- 2- Format for Permit Renewal Strategy (2 pp)

Distribution

Asst. FM Havre – 1

Asst. FM Glasgow – 1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240
<http://www.blm.gov>

February 1, 2006

In Reply Refer To:
4100 (220) P
Ref: WO-IM-2003-071

EMS TRANSMISSION 02/08/2006
Instruction Memorandum No. 2006-089
Expires: 09/30/2007

To: All State Directors except Eastern States and Alaska
From: Director
Subject: Developing Strategy to Eliminate the Backlog of Unprocessed Grazing
Permits by End of Fiscal Year 2009 DD: 03/31/2006

Program Area: Rangeland Management

Purpose: The purpose of this Memorandum is to reaffirm the Bureau's commitment to eliminating the backlog of unprocessed grazing permits by the end of FY2009. I am continuing to communicate this commitment to Congress and the Office of Management and Budget, and provide them with a status report at the end of each fiscal year.

Policy/Action: Each State has prepared a report on its current permit processing schedule, including backlog of permits not yet fully processed, as defined in Washington Office Instruction Memorandum 2003-071, and permits scheduled to expire through Fiscal Year 2009. The report was used in the January 17-19, 2006, Rangeland Management Workshop to discuss workload and potential actions to meet the 2009 commitment.

By March 31, 2006, each State is to develop and provide to AD-200 a strategy for eliminating the backlog of permit renewals by the end of FY2009. Information and recommendations from the January 2006 Rangeland Management Workshop should be considered when developing your plans. Your strategy should include the workload information from your State report mentioned above, any obstacles or potential obstacles your State has identified, how you plan to overcome these obstacles, and any other work that will be forgone in order to meet the commitment.

Background: In 1999 and 2000, almost 7,200 of the 18,000 grazing permits administered by BLM expired. This coincided with a change in policy regarding NEPA analysis to document site specific grazing effects and initiating evaluation of the status of land health. As a result of the convergence of these major workloads, many grazing permits were not processed and issued in a timely manner. Congress provided administrative relief through annual appropriations language for several years. In 2000 and 2001, BLM developed a strategy to link these major tasks to improve the availability of fresh information for the NEPA documents associated with issuing grazing permits and to more effectively complete cumulative impact analysis. Congress then enacted language to provide relief through FY2009. Since 1999, BLM has been providing to Congress and OMB, annual progress reports on eliminating the

backlog of expired and unprocessed grazing permits. While the Bureau has made significant progress up through 2003, the backlog has actually increased in the last 2 years rather than being reduced.

The Washington Office has used the recently completed program reviews in six States to assess the current processes, interpretation of policy, and concerns for meeting the 2009 target. During these reviews, field offices and States identified some obstacles that need to be addressed to meet the 2009 target. The findings of these reviews were presented and briefly discussed at a Rangeland Management Workshop held in January 2006.

Time Frame: Effective immediately.

Budget Impact: The use and distribution of available funds may be affected to various degrees from FY2006 through FY2009. No additional range program funding is anticipated.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: None

Coordination: State Rangeland Management Specialists.

Contact: Bob Bolton, Senior Rangeland Management Specialist, WO 220 at (202) 452-7792; or Dick Mayberry, Rangeland Management Specialist, WO 220 at (202) 452-7750.

Signed by:
Lawrence E. Benna
Acting, Director

Authenticated by:
Robert M. Williams
Policy and Records Group, WO-560

Permit Renewal Strategy Report

This table represents the number of permits, expiring/year and the carryover permits, shown in RAS. The WO uses RAS as the official number for reporting units. If you do not agree with their number explain in the comment section below and update your RAS number.

Permit Renewal Report For Montana/Dakotas

Permits Expiring	2006	2007	2008	2009	Carryover	Total
State Total	197	219	354	1254	213	2237
Office						
010	9	7	33	129	-	178
020	75	79	188	692	4	1038
030	6	8	8	2	-	24
040	20	42	52	33	-	147
050	16	10	13	74	134	247
060*	6	21	26	75		128
070	23	8	4	50	-	85
090	7	7	11	72	-	97
092	14	11	5	10	-	40
093	19	26	14	94	75	228
100	2	-	-	23		25
Total	197	219	354	1254	213	2237

(Information from RAS as of January 13, 2006)

*Monument numbers are included in 060.

By Office, develop a report on current status and strategy for eliminating the backlog and meeting the permit renewal target by the end of FY 2009.

1. Using the table provided, update your current status.

Permits Expiring	2006	2007	2008	2009	Carryover	Total
OFFICE						
010	xx	xx	xx			

Updates to your schedule should be in **RED**....

2. If your office will have difficulties in meeting the target, provide the following:

- What obstacles or potential obstacles will cause problems?
- How do you plan to overcome these obstacles?
- What changes or work will be forgone in order to meet the commitment?
- What assistance you may need to meet the target.

3. For offices that will meet the target, please outline any assistance or support your may be able to offer other offices, either on a zone or interoffice basis.

4. Other comments as necessary

NOTE: If your office shows a carryover or numbers that do not match the RAS number, Reference your comments by year and explain: